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Report No. DODIG-2013-089

June 6, 2013

# Inspector General

United States  
Department of Defense



DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR INTELLIGENCE  
AND SPECIAL PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS

## Hotline Report on the Proposed Elimination of the Nuclear Command and Control System Support Staff

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MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Hotline Report on the Proposed Elimination of the Nuclear Command and Control System Support Staff (Report No. DODIG-2013-089)

In October 2012, the DoD Office of Inspector General received a hotline complaint alleging that the Deputy Secretary of Defense, through the office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation, was preparing to eliminate the Nuclear Command and Control System [NCCS] Support Staff (NSS). DoD staff billets from NSS would allegedly be transferred to supplement the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA). The allegation stated that because National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD)-28 established the NSS as an independent staff with an interagency mission to serve the President, the Deputy Secretary of Defense has no authority to eliminate the NSS while NSPD-28 is in effect.

(FOUO) We were unable to identify any provision of NSPD-28 or federal law specifically prohibiting the Deputy Secretary of Defense from transferring billets from the NSS to DISA. The Secretary of Defense, and by extension, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, has the authority to organize the DoD staff in accordance with federal law and as he/she deems necessary to accomplish the mission. However, the use of NSS billets to increase DISA staff would require transfer of NSPD-28 responsibilities. Therefore, we concluded that the only relevant hotline issue to examine was how the presidentially-directed responsibilities would be accomplished if the billets are removed from the NSS. After a preliminary inquiry, we delayed initiating the review because a decision regarding use of NSS billets to improve DISA's nuclear systems engineering capability had yet to be made. Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation had explained that NSS presidentially-directed responsibilities would be presented to the Deputies Management Action Group for a decision. However, using NSS billets to improve DISA's nuclear systems engineering capability was subsequently dropped from the Deputies Management Action Group's decision making process. The issue later reappeared when the DoD Chief Information Officer's office released its proposal package for a Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications Joint Integration Office for principal-level coordination. The DoD Chief Information Officer's proposal included the transfer of all NSS DoD billets, with little indication of how NSS functions would be executed.

(FOUO) We conducted this hotline investigation between December 2012 and February 2013 in accordance with generally-accepted government inspection standards. We interviewed designated DoD Chief Information Officer points of contact responsible for tracking approval of the implementation plan and for providing coordination. Additionally, we reviewed numerous email correspondences relating to the package to determine if the plan for NSS responsibilities was to:

- a.) assign NDPPD-28 duties to other organizations such as DISA;
- b.) wait to transfer billets until after NSPD-28 is rewritten to remove requirements; or
- c.) transfer billets immediately and stop performing those particular NSPD-28 functions.

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**(FOUO) Results of the Review.** We determined that the NSS billets will not be used to staff the new office at DISA. However, we have concerns regarding how the potential decision was staffed. Specifically, the staffing lacked proper coordination with the appropriate offices tasked under NSPD-28, to include the White House National Security Staff, which has primary responsibility for presidential directives. Also, the DoD Chief Information Officer's coordination package did not propose any alternate means to fulfill NSS's NSPD-28 requirements. If approved, the package would have resulted in NSS billets being moved prior to determining how to execute presidentially-directed interagency functions. However, no coordinating organizations supported reassigning the NSS billets without rewriting NSPD-28 or tasking another organization to execute the NSS Executive Agent responsibilities that are assigned to the Secretary of Defense. Additionally, several POCs stated that due to the short suspense, they lacked time needed to coordinate the package, and inclusion of the memo stating the Deputy Secretary of Defense interest was perceived as pressure to quickly concur. Finally, the DoD Chief Information Officer's office used the memo stating the Deputy Secretary of Defense interest to justify denial of requested coordination deadline extensions.

If you have questions concerning this report, please contact [REDACTED]<sup>(b)(6)</sup>, [REDACTED]<sup>(b)(6)</sup>  
[REDACTED] for Intelligence and Special Program Assessments, at 703-699-[REDACTED]<sup>(b)(6)</sup>

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Anthony C. Thomas  
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